

**School Committee Workshop  
Shrewsbury High School  
64 Holden Street  
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts**

**Wednesday, August 24, 2016**

Present: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Dr. Dale Magee, Vice Chairperson; Mr. John Samia; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Meg Belsito, Director of Special Education & Pupil Personnel Services; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The meeting was convened by Ms. Fryc at 3:07 pm in the Class of 2002 Conference Room at Shrewsbury High School.

**Approval of Workshop Minutes**

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the committee unanimously agreed to approve the Workshop Minutes from April 14, 2016, as amended with the addition of Dr. Magee as an attendee; December 9, 2015; January 13, 2016; and March 30, 2016.

**Executive Session**

At 3:09 pm, on a motion made by Ms. Fryc, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn into executive session for the purpose of approval of minutes from multiple Executive Session meetings. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Canzano, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

The Committee returned to open session at 3:14 pm.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

On a motion from Ms. Canzano, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the School Committee meetings of April 26, May 25, June 8, and June 15, 2016.

**Planning for 2016-17 School Year: Discussion**

Dr. Sawyer provided potential topics for the 2016-2017 School Committee meetings by date. These include a discussion on class rank, and the potential for the committee to vote to take a position on upcoming state ballot questions regarding lifting the cap on charter schools and

legalizing recreational marijuana. Committee members expressed an interest in taking a position on the charter school question due to its direct relevance to and potential effect upon the school district. The Committee expressed interest in learning more about the marijuana issue and how it has impacted schools in states where it is already legalized, but was undecided on whether it would take any official position on this matter. Dr. Sawyer recommended that the committee take a position on proposed legislation for Charter Schools. Reports on both topics will be provided in the early fall at School Committee meetings.

Mr. Collins recommended adding a vote in October to recommend that Town Meeting appropriate funds for the feasibility study for the Beal School building project. Dr. Sawyer recommended changing the date of the joint School Council meeting from October 3 to October 17 so the meeting will not take place during the Rosh Hashanah holiday. Dr. Magee proposed dedicating ten minutes per School Committee meeting to addressing one aspect of the budget/budget process.

Regarding strategic planning, Dr. Sawyer suggested targeting spring of 2017 to summarize and provide updates on improvement plans relative to the current five year plan, with an eye towards proposing the next five year plan in the fall of 2017, with School Committee approval by December 2017.

Mr. Collins addressed fiscal planning and referenced previous work done by Needham Public Schools and Shrewsbury Public Schools (2006) as examples of fiscal projections that communicate complex information in a way that is understandable to the community. Committee members offered ideas on how and when to present information in the short- and long-term to best inform the community. Mr. Collins, Mr. Samia, and Dr. Magee will meet as a subcommittee again in September to address fiscal planning.

## **Updates to the Committee**

Ms. Belsito advised that overall the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Coordinated Program Review report on special education, English language learner education, and civil rights compliance, was very good, and that the district was 100% in compliance across the many special education indicators, which is highly unusual. She indicated that there were some minor findings in English language education and civil rights that would be readily addressed to come into compliance, including the location of where English language learner students were being serviced in the Coolidge building and the need for overall annual self-assessment of civil rights compliance. She noted she would be meeting the following day with a representative from DESE regarding the required corrective action plan.

Mr. Collins advised that a recent DESE grant audit was really a review, and noted that the overall result was positive. He complimented Ms. Elizabeth Callahan on her work compiling a great deal of information in a short period of time. All documents were produced in the time requested, and only one expense was identified as having been misclassified by category.

Ms. Malone addressed the SAFIS (fingerprint) background check requirement and noted that all new hires were in compliance or were waiting on letters of suitability from previous districts, and that only a handful of existing employees were waiting to be fingerprinted. Ms. Malone noted that employees would not be able to start work with students until they were compliant. Dr. Sawyer noted that even though employees paid the fee for being fingerprinted, there were costs to the district due to additional staff hours needed to process the associated forms.

Mr. Collins presented information and data on special revenue and revolving account funds, and listed Shrewsbury Education Foundation (SEF) grants and full day kindergarten as examples. Mr. Collins advised that these funds play an important role in the financial health of the district, and that they are typically not addressed in detail at Town Meeting because they are not part of the appropriated budget that Town Meeting approves, although information is provided in the Town Meeting budget packet. Committee members indicated that it is good to have transparency regarding various sources of funding, and that it was clear that these funds are crucial for the district and that they are already being leveraged to offset the appropriated budget in various ways that leave little to no opportunity for any additional relief.

Regarding the Shrewsbury High School athletic fields, Mr. Collins noted that efforts are being focused on “Priority 1”, installing turf on the SHS stadium field, and on a fundraising campaign for the fields. Mr. Collins also advised that a community member had reached out and wanted to meet to discuss potential environmental concerns surrounding artificial turf.

Mr. Collins addressed current HVAC projects at Spring Street and Paton elementary schools, and noted that the Paton project will be largely done at the start of school. The Spring Street project was moving at a slower pace, but the expectation is that school will open on time. The heating system is not expected to be functional until late September, but this should not have an impact given local weather conditions.

### **China Exchange: Vote**

Ms. Banios and Sherwood Middle School Principal Jane Lizotte have been invited to visit schools in Daxing, China, with a specific focus on teaching and learning at the Daxing Elementary School, from September 8-15 through Boston Ivy, LLC. Dr. Sawyer noted that the committee is the appointing authority for Ms. Banios, and recommended that the committee vote to approve third-party subsidized travel for Ms. Banios as it serves a legitimate public purpose, namely to build the exchange program between Daxing and Shrewsbury.

On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Dr. Magee, the committee voted unanimously to authorize third-party subsidized travel and lodging for the Assistant Superintendent’s trip to Daxing, China, to benefit the existing exchange program.

### **Evaluation of the Superintendent: Discussion**

The existing evaluation process was deemed difficult because of the time of year that it takes

place. Committee members and Dr. Sawyer discussed changing the timetable so that the evaluation could be done at the end of the calendar year in the future. This would entail condensing the process in 2016. In the short term, Dr. Sawyer will provide a list of goals for the committee to review. An evaluation would be performed in December, 2016, for June - December 2016. In January 2017, the process would begin for the 2017 calendar year.

Dr. Sawyer suggested utilizing Google Drive or Schoology as a means of communicating with the committee around the performance evaluation. Dr. Magee noted that the existing evaluation consists of three levels - summary, categories, and fine detail -and added that it did not always allow members to convey their feedback accurately, and wanted to know if/what permission might be necessary from the DESE to change the form or format.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 5:07 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Canzano, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum

Documents referenced:

- 1) School Committee Meeting Dates & Potential Topics 2016-2017 Document
- 2) Title IIA and Title III Review Summary
- 3) 2016 Coordinated Program Review
- 4) FY 2017 Special Education Program Plan Statement
- 5) SAFIS (Fingerprint) Background Check Audit Memo
- 6) Title IIA and Title III Financial Review Memo
- 7) Special Revenue Funds Historical Data: FY14-16 Memo
- 8) Special Revenue Funds Spreadsheets and Graphs
- 9) Facility Project Updates Memo
- 10) Spring Street and Paton School Projects Presentation
- 11) Travel Expenses Disclosure Document